

City of Somerville, Massachusetts  
Job Creation and Retention Trust

***Trustees***

Thomas Bent

Vickie Choitz

Lisa Cook

Silvana Dinka

Thomas Galligani

Anika Van Eaton

Rand Wilson

Jesse Clingan

**Minutes**

Somerville Job Creation and Retention Trust

Tuesday, February 9th, 2020 at 6:00PM

Virtual meeting

In attendance: Tom Galligani, Tom Bent, Anika Van Eaton, Rand Wilson, Vickie Choitz

Meeting commenced at 6:00 pm.

**1. Approve January 12 meeting minutes**

- Motion to approve made by Tom Bent. Motion was seconded by Vicki Choitz
- Motion was passed unanimously by roll-call vote

**2. Mayor's Summer Job's program presentation-postponed until March 12 meeting**

**3. Updates**

- **Status on Staffing for Jobs Board in 2021**
  - T Galligani-Workforce Development Specialist position has been vacant since December. The Economic Development Division is in the process of hiring for another position, at which point the Workforce Development Specialist Business position will be posted. The Jobs Trust Coordinator position will be posted

shortly after. There will be more updates to share for March 12 meeting.

- **Urban Agenda Grant Application- High Roads Kitchen**

- City of Somerville submitted a grant the Commonwealth with High Road Kitchen and The Welcome Project on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately the proposal was declined by the state. Grant Administer Laura Hass will seek feedback from State regarding issues with the proposal.
- Based on direction from the granting agency, the State provided insight regarding the City's proposal that it was unlikely to provide a grant for a proposal providing assistance directly to businesses. From that feedback, the City modified the application to request state funding to provide training for staff, and city funding for direct funding to businesses. Laura will get a formal debriefing.

#### **4. Discuss 2021 investment priorities in preparation for a planned March vote**

- [Investment Purposes Statement](#)
- *Category 1:* Invest in a second round of the types of programs funded in 2020
  1. Wage Theft/workers rights and responsibilities training
  2. Industry-specific training
  3. Contextualized education for adult and English Language Learners
    - V Choitz - We will not be getting feedback on the outcomes from program administrators in these categories until this summer. These category of initiatives will be considered for the vote on March 9 and depending on the outcome either a new RFP will be drafted or expanded contracts will be extended to the existing programs.
- *Category 2:* New investment ideas
  1. **Rapid response strategy for worker displacement.**
    - The board discussed how to best mobilize when there is a need for a rapid response and if the City could hire a consultant to develop a plan and provide training.
    - V Choitz- Could the development of the plan and training be less than \$10,000 or is it more?
    - T Galligani- A consultant could be hired to review the MAPC framework and develop a tactical plan on an annual basis. The idea is to train existing City and partners economic development staff to provide the intervention.
    - V Choitz- Training should include rapid response and resources with intent to fill the gaps in the states system, including assisting those that don't meet the state's threshold.

- V Choitz- Should this be specific for smaller employers with less than 75 employees?
- T Galligani- make the intent of extending more resources to larger companies laying off more employees or filling the gap in the state system.
- Members agreed on edits made and agreed to consider the edited idea for the prioritized voting on March 9.

## **2. Professional development for adult education teachers and workforce professionals.**

- The members discussed establishing small grants less than 10k to provide education, training, employment, career navigation/coaching, worker rights training, and related supports to Somerville residents. The RFP should be flexible in allow for agencies use of funds towards professional development and training. They also discussed if this is the right time to be implementing professional development given the need for job training given large number of unemployment related to the pandemic.
- Supporting teachers to go to adult education conference. Job quality curriculum. This will not be a professional development program.
- A Van Eaton- This type of resources would be helpful to support our providers be on top of the most current technology. Targeting professional development and keeping it open ended since other grants typically restrict Professional Development.
- T Bent - How does this align with other RFP's that the Jobs Trust is funding?
- A Van Eaton - Somerville adult education training providers could benefit from a training which would allow for more direct service work and less administrative inefficiencies.
- A Van Eaton - This is a train the trainer situation when a certain instance comes up where trainers need to fill the gap in their knowledge or pivot how they operate, this fund could help push the applicant in the right direction.

## **3. Job quality HR training for small biz in Somerville**

- The description was approved for voting for March 12 meeting.

- T Bent - if the new board member is approved, their input would be welcomed with new ideas on this particular goal.
4. **Childcare career advancement initiative-** \$127,000 to \$177,000
    - A Van Eaton - If we are keen on long-term impactful outcomes, this is a useful initiative to consider.
    - The description was approved for voting March 9 meeting
  5. **One-year post-placement support for students in the 2020 Jobs and Trust training and adult education programs**
    - The description was approved for voting for March 9 meeting.
  6. **Digital literacy training and resources**
    - No edits or suggestions were made.
    - T Bent - We should keep it in, and put out the RFP and see what comes back.
    - The description was approved for voting for March 9 meeting.
  7. **Public Space and Urban Forestry Participatory Action Research (PAR) Team \$37,580**
    - V Choitz - Let's keep it on the list, and see where it falls on the list of our priorities.
    - T Bent - It's unclear what skills were training on in this initiative.
    - V Choitz - This would be an initiative that would need to get started ASAP
    - The description was approved for voting on March 9 meeting
  8. **Employee-ownership / work cooperative business model support**
    - A Van Eaton - discussed several angles that providers may consider into three clear descriptions. Specify intense training and not funding for incubator proposals for use of funds.
    - T Bent - Mission creep is a concern when investing in businesses vs training and the overlap with areas that the City Economic Development Division and community partner already serve. If it's more open-ended about how to start up a business, it is more within the scope of the Jobs Trust.

- T Galligani- The three descriptions are clear, and it's interesting to see where these go.
- V Choitz - To clarify what the definition of an incubator is to be more targeted around outreach and training
- T Bent - Could we connect with Greentown Labs to create an idea for further research?
- V Choitz - Including the child care co-op example is interesting for how important childcare is for job seekers to be able to get to work.
- The description was approved for voting for on March 9 meeting.

9. **Appendix:** Green Building Retrofitting Jobs Training Program

- The group felt it's important to keep.

10. **New initiative:** R Wilson presented another idea for new initiatives to create a joint labor management training program for local hire into city jobs using an apprentice model similar to that of trades. To look for models outside of the city, to pipeline high schoolers into city positions and city employees into more skilled city positions. The idea would be to write and RFP for a study to be done to better understand this type of model and hire someone who can do some digging.

- Rand Wilson will outline seeking a vendor that suggest potential models that would inform a potential RFP to include as an option for voting in March 9

5. **Other business not reasonably anticipated by the Chair**

- No other business was discussed.

6. **Adjournment**

- R Wilson made a motion to adjourn
- A Van Eaton seconded that motion to adjourn.
- T Bent, T Galligani, L Cook, V Choitz, and A Van Eaton voted to adjourn.
- The meeting ended at 7:14 pm